

Swindon Council's Vision, Aims and Values

The Swindon Community Strategy

"A Shared Vision for Swindon 2008-30"

Overall Approach

The Community Strategy provides the strategic direction for all public sector organisations and agencies working across the Borough. The Local Strategic Partnership has consulted widely on a refreshed Community Strategy 2008-30, which was launched in February 2008 at the LSP Conference.

It has six key themes that provide the over-arching policy framework for the Council to work in partnership to improve the quality of life for the residents of Swindon:

- Swindon: a destination of choice
- All Swindon people are benefiting from our growing economy
- We have safeguarded our environment for future generations
- A healthy, caring and supportive community
- A place where high aspirations are supported by superb education provision for all ages
- A place where local people can have real influence and where they feel safe

The Swindon Local Area Agreement 2006-2009

The Community Strategy was used as the starting point for the Local Area Agreement (LAA). The LAA has enabled all organisations, partners and stakeholders to bring into sharp focus the main priorities in the Borough and to explore ways we can work effectively and ambitiously together.

The four blocks of the LAA are:

- Economic Development and Enterprise
- Children and Young People
- Safer and Strong Communities
- Healthy Communities and Older People

These four principles sit above the four blocks:

- Partnership Working
- Creating Sustainable Communities
- Equality, Inclusion and Cohesion
- Citizenship, Pride and Identity

The Local Area Agreement has brought a stronger focus on delivery in partnership prompted a review of the Community Strategy. The five strategic outcomes in the Children and Young People's Block were based on the analysis of needs and services, were developed and agreed with all agencies in Swindon, and form the basis of the Children and Young People's Plan and the Strategic Management Plan for Children Services.

LAA 2 will be launched in June 2008.

The Swindon Corporate Plan

The Corporate Plan is the unifying document and all other policies conform to this Plan, which provides cohesion and direction to the council. The Corporate Plan outlines the key roles of the Council which are captured below:



There are five distinct themes:

1. Your Council
2. Your Culture
3. Your Children, Your Family – the people who matter
4. Your Town
5. Your Communities.

It is within this context that the Children Services Strategic Management Plan outlines its contribution to delivering effective services to support the roles of the Council and the five distinct themes. Children Services, through multi-agency working, can make a significant contribution to Community Leadership and Building Neighbourhood Capacity.

Swindon Annual Operating Plan

The Swindon Annual Operating Plan underpins the Corporate Plan by describing the Council's focus for the next financial year and detailing where resources must be focused.

Vision for Children and Young People Service

We believe that:

“Children and young people in Swindon deserve the best start in life and we want them to enjoy life, to achieve, to stay safe from harm, to be healthy and to grow up to be successful adults in a loving, caring environment.”

In order to ensure a focus on well being and safeguarding, local organisations are working together through the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and the children’s trust arrangements prioritising:

- Strong core services
- Intervening early in children and young people’s lives when there are difficulties
- Improved integrated working.

Our principles for developing services are:

- High quality
- Accessible for all
- Effective involvement of children, young people, parents and carers
- Ensuring equality for all taking account of race, religion, gender, disability and sexual orientation
- Ensuring the safety of children underpins all provision
- Providing local solutions
- Demonstrating improvements in outcomes for children and young people
- Reducing inequalities.

In order to narrow the gap in outcomes between the most vulnerable children and all children, we will implement 10 golden threads based on evidence-based research from the national Narrow the Gap Programme

- Expecting the best of all our children and having high aspirations for them
- Working with parents and building on the strengths in each family
- Having children at the centre of everything we do
- Holding on to the baton so that all services offer continuity in delivery for children and young people
- Building resilience so children are happy and able to learn
- Having a wide range of experiences for children in and out of school through sports, arts, leisure
- Integrating our services so that children benefit from a multi disciplinary approach
- Celebrating the skills and knowledge of our workforce
- Building on what works best so services demonstrate measurable improvements
- Agreed vision and priorities across all partners

Values

We believe that it is important to have a clear set of values that are explicitly stated, which guide our work and which can be used to evaluate our success.

We will:

- always have the needs of Swindon children and young people as our starting point;
- always strive to provide effective leadership;
- always seek evidence about the impact of our work on positive outcomes for individuals;
- always conduct ourselves with integrity;
- be fully accountable for the quality of our work;
- be accessible, responsive and respectful;
- always offer objective, expert advice that is grounded in proven best practice;
- employ expert staff with up-to-date skills, carefully matched to the needs of Swindon;
- demonstrate our theoretical and practical understanding of, and commitment to equal opportunities for all to respect diversity and actively promote social inclusion;
- maintain open, positive and self-critical relationships with all stakeholders;
- place a great importance on demonstrating good communications;
- provide value for money;
- promote and support our values by leadership and by example, and
- demonstrate best practice in our partnership working with the public sector.

Children and Young People's Plan/LAA draft priorities 2008 – 2011

The Children & Young People's Plan 2006–2009 was reviewed in 2007. This review was informed by:

- New legislation and guidance, for example the Education & Inspections Act 2006, Care Matters and the Local Government White Paper: Stronger Communities
- Demographic changes in Swindon, particularly the planned expansion to the South and East of Swindon with a potential rise in population from 185,000–250,000 by 2026. Specifically live births have gone up considerably in the North of
- A new needs profile of children and young people in Swindon highlighting a growing Black and Minority Ethnic population

The Review of the Children & Young People's Plan reached the following conclusions:

- **Targeted programmes in areas of disadvantage have improved some outcomes for younger children but overall there is evidence of continued inequalities across Swindon.** Children and young people living in Penhill, Parks, Walcot East, Central, Pinehurst & Gorse Hill, Freshbrook and Toothill experience poorer health outcomes, have a lower level of educational attainment, are more likely to become young offenders, looked after children and in need of protection and are more likely to be unemployed at the age of 16 and 17.
- **The number of children and young people from black and minority ethnic communities is rising,** particularly Asian children, those from Eastern Europe and those of mixed heritage. Children from diverse backgrounds account for 13.9% of primary age children in January 2007 compared to 12.5% in 2006. A growing number of primary schools in the centre and in West Swindon have populations of more than 20% of children from Black and Ethnic Minority communities and Europe. Certain groups of children and young people do not achieve as highly as others at Key Stages 2 and 3. Children from black and ethnic minorities are over represented among children with fixed term exclusions. Children and young people of mixed heritage are over represented among looked after children and young offenders.
- **Young people say that they want** more youth centres in areas of disadvantage and more things to do, such as sports, drama and music, a place to meet friends, skate parks and clubs for girls. Young people also wanted better support through counselling, help in dealing with bullying and better advice and information about health issues. Adults should treat young people with respect, listen to them and make decisions and plans with them and not for them.

Emerging Priorities 2008–2011

A new Children & Young People's Plan and Local Area Agreement 2008 – 2011 have been produced in order to address:

- The emerging findings of the new needs profile;
- The views of children and young people expressed through the Tell Us 2 findings, the Youth Forum and a Swindon wide Conference;
- The National Outcome and Indicator Set (October 2007) and learning from the implementation of the Children Act 2004;
- Findings from the Annual Performance Assessment;
- Evaluation of the Common Assessment

Overarching theme:

- Narrow the gap between children from disadvantaged groups and communities and their peers so that all children achieve and their life chances increase.

Over arching principles:

- **Early intervention**, so that outcomes improve by targeted resources to identify children's needs at an early stage and complex and long term difficulties are prevented.
- **Strong core services**, to improve outcomes for all children through effective and high quality services.
- **Multi agency working**, to reduce inequalities by delivering effective and evidence-based multi disciplinary interventions and without multi agency working we will not achieve increasing the levels of skills in the workforce, improving information sharing and eliminating duplication in service delivery.

Priorities based on the Five Every Child Matters Outcomes for Local Area Agreement

Be Healthy

Children grow up to be healthy and have the best start in life (LAA)

- Reduce all age, all cause mortality across Swindon (NI120)
- Reduce the year on year rise in obesity of children in year 6 to 17.24% by 2011 (NI56)

Children respect each other and are emotionally secure and confident

- Promote the emotional health of children (NI50)
- Reduce bullying among children to 16% by 2011 (NI69)

Stay Safe

Children are safe, vulnerable children are identified early and have their needs addressed and complex problems are prevented (LAA)

- Increase referrals going to initial assessment to 58% by 2011 (NI68)

Children have stable lives

- Reduce the number of looked after children to 220 and reduce those placed with independent providers to 33 by 2011

Enjoy & Achieve

Children achieve at school and have high aspirations. The gap between the achievement of vulnerable children and all children reduces (LAA)

- Improve achievement of all children and young people, particularly at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 to that of similar authorities by 2011
- Narrow the gap for children who are vulnerable so that there are no schools with more than 30% achieving less than their peers at Key Stages 4 (16 national indicators)

Make a Positive Contribution/

Young people are healthy and safe LAA

- Reduce teenage conception rates to 24 per 1,000 by 2009 and 2010 (NI112) and reduce chlamydia rates from a baseline to be established in 2009.
- Reduce the number of young people involved in illegal substance misuse and consumption of alcohol and more young people completing substance misuse treatment (LAA) (NI115) to 70 by 2010

Young people are valued, have their voice heard and enjoy themselves (LAA)

- Increase young people's involvement in positive activities from a baseline to be established in 2008 by 10% (TBC) 2011 (NI 110).

Achieve Economic Well-Being

Young people have the opportunity to succeed (LAA)

- Reduce the percentage of young people aged 16 to 18 not in education, training or employment to 5.4% by 2011 (NI117).

In 2008 services for all children and young people and those with additional needs will be delivered through five Integrated Locality Teams for Children & Young People:

- North
- Central North
- Central South
- South
- Integrated Services for disabled children and young people.

Children's social care services for children in need and those in need of protection will be co-located with the geographically based teams. The Disabled Children Team (Social Care) is co-located with the Integrated Service for Disabled Children at Salt Way. There will be a specialist service for children and young people in care.

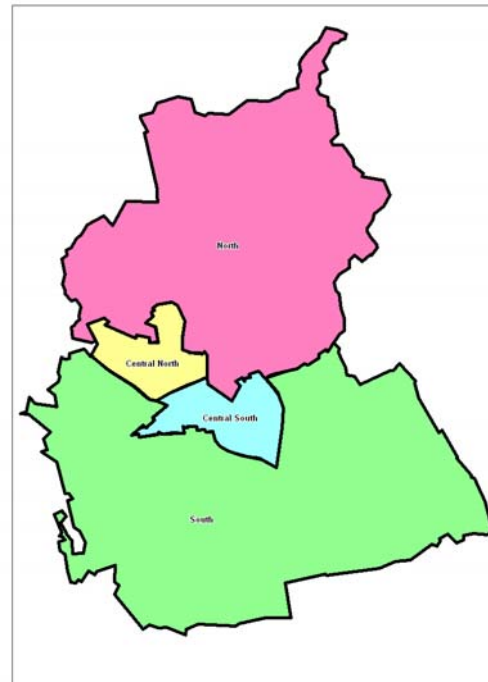
Since April 2008 the Local Authority has become responsible for making arrangements for the delivery of Connexions services. These include statutory responsibilities, which include:

- The provision of the Connexions Service under Section 114 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000
- Conducting assessments relating to learning difficulties under Section 140 of the Learning and Skills Act
- Provision of careers services under Sections 8 and 9 of the Employment and Training Act 1973

The needs assessment completed in 2007 and refreshed in 2008 also analysed all data based on wards and aggregated this to four geographical neighbourhoods. Two managers' conferences, a stakeholder event for schools and for partners developing extended services and children's centres analysed the information for each of the five Integrated Locality Teams for Children & Young People. This work identified priorities.

Swindon Borough Council (SBC) and partners plan to introduce an integrated Neighbourhood Management model in respect of its service delivery, led by the Local Area Agreement Partnership. The initiative is branded "*Connecting People Connecting Places*" and has the following four key strategic aims:

1. Enabling citizens to better influence local decision making
2. Focus on better local access to services
3. Development of localised service delivery
4. Schools at the heart of their community



Leadership

We are committed to providing effective leadership within the context of the rest of the Local Authority recognising that leadership depends on collective and corporate commitment, on shared vision and agreed strategies across a range of partners.

We are committed to providing effective leadership and management, knowing what it looks like, taking the right steps to practise it and using it to improve the organisation's performance.

Within the Children and Young People Service we are committed to encouraging and developing a learning environment and to developing our leaders. We aim to recognise and disseminate good practice within the organisation and benchmark ourselves against other organisations.

We aim for leadership, which encourages:

- innovation;
- recognition and dissemination of good practice;
- reflection on our style of leadership;
- the development of coaching and mentoring to support staff;
- effective strategic and business planning which ensures resources are linked to priorities;
- effective performance management and competency based appraisal.

Through effective leadership and management we aim to energise and motivate to ensure that we effectively addressed the key issues facing children and young people within Swindon.

STRATEGIC SERVICE OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS

Strategic Management Plan Aims 2008-2009

We set out six aims. These are used to provide a structure for the action plan set out in Appendix 1 of this Strategic Management Plan and for the performance management of the leadership team, each of whom take lead responsibilities for work associated with a particular aim.

Our six aims are:

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| Aim 1 | To provide effective leadership, continuous service improvement and the promotion of effective partnerships, which improve the life chance of children and young people in Swindon. |
| Aim 2 | To ensure that every school and early years settings receives the support and challenge it needs to be successful for all its children and young people. |
| Aim 3 | To secure the effective and efficient use of resources to deliver the priorities. |
| Aim 4 | To develop & sustain creative solutions to identified need and ensure integrated services maximise the well-being of children and young people. |
| Aim 5 | To safeguard vulnerable children and young people, promoting the upbringing of children by their families wherever possible, but providing permanence and the highest quality alternative care where needed. |
| Aim 6 | To provide effective strategic planning & commissioning of services through robust partnerships (including the voluntary sector), which improve the Every Child Matters outcomes of children and young people in Swindon. |

Strategic Service Objectives 2008-2009

This section sets out the strategic service objectives associated with each of the strategic aims and the risk assessment before management action. They form the detailed structure of the Action Plan 2008-2009 in Appendix 1.

Aim 1: To provide effective leadership, continuous service improvement and the promotion of effective partnerships, which improve the life chance of children and young people in Swindon.

To demonstrate we have achieved this we will expect to see:	Risk Rating		
	L	I	Risk
Aim 1	3	2	6
1.1 That a high priority is being given to services for children and young people through effective Council policy and strategic planning with clear actions for implementation.	2	3	6
1.2 Councillors being well supported to enable them to provide well-informed and determined political leadership demonstrated by accurate and transparent decision making.	2	3	6
1.3 Priorities being clear, based on a rigorous evaluation of need and through "partnership working" achieve challenging agreed targets.	1	2	2
1.4 The Children Services Directorate taking reasonable steps to meet all statutory obligations.	1	4	4

Aim 2 : To ensure that every school and early years setting receives the support and challenge it needs to be successful for all its children and young people.

To demonstrate we have achieved this we will expect to see:		Risk Rating		
		L	I	Risk
Aim 2		3	3	9
2.1	All children and young people enjoy their education and achieve challenging but realistic personal and educational targets. Overall educational standards at primary improve at least in line with national improvement and secondary levels improve faster than the national average	3	3	9
2.2	Well-led, confident, self-improving schools and early years settings which connect with their community and accurately self-evaluate their performance and receive the appropriate level of support from the Children Service.	2	3	6
2.3	Collaborative arrangements between schools/early years' settings and partners, and including other agencies, actively involved in promoting and disseminating best local and national practice, focussed on raising standards	2	2	4
2.4	Rapid recovery of schools and early years settings in special measures or having a notice to improve and a reduced number of schools and settings that the local authority considers to be a cause for concern	2	4	8

Aim 3 : To secure the effective and efficient use of resources to deliver the priorities.

To demonstrate we have achieved this we will expect to see:	Risk Rating		
	L	I	Risk
Aim 3	3	3	9
3.1 Ensure school place planning supports school improvement and enables effective asset management planning.	3	3	9
3.2 An effective strategic framework is in place which enables appropriate commissioning and procurement of services	2	3	6
3.3 Resources are managed effectively and efficiently in line with the practice of best value	2	3	6
3.4 Effective monitoring of the use of resources to achieve priorities.	2	3	6

Aim 4 To develop & sustain creative solutions to identified need and ensure integrated services maximise the well-being of children and young people.

To demonstrate we have achieved this we will expect to see:	Risk Rating		
	L	I	Risk
Aim 4	3	3	9
4.1 Swindon schools and early years settings have improved skills and capacity to meet the needs of children and young people who are vulnerable, including those who have special educational needs.	3	2	6
4.2 The further development and improvement of the continuum of provision in the Borough to effectively meet the needs of children and young people with special educational needs.	2	3	6
4.3 More effective co-ordinated and integrated services to support children and young people including those who are vulnerable.	2	3	6
4.4 Resources refocused to support prevention, early identification and intervention.	2	3	6
4.5 The Youth Service is well managed with high achievement, high expectations, clear vision and delivers a universal and targeted service in a multi agency provision.	3	3	9
4.6 A well managed play service that enables children and young people to participate in free play opportunities.	3	2	6
4.7 Plas Pencelli Outdoor Education Centre provides quality services to schools, youth groups and other organisations.	3	2	6
4.8 Child Protection Lead for Education works with schools to ensure robust child protection procedures are adhered to.	4	3	12

Aim 5 To safeguard vulnerable children and young people, promoting the upbringing of children by their families wherever possible, but providing permanence and the highest quality alternative care where needed.

To demonstrate we have achieved this we will expect to see	Risk Rating		
	L	I	Risk
Aim 5	4	2	8
5.1 Effective and timely assessment, intervention and services delivered, jointly with our partners, to safeguard children and young people, and to promote their welfare, including young people in care for whom we are Corporate Parents.	2	4	8
5.2 Effective targeted resources for children and young people with a range of needs. For children who are looked after, stable well-matched placements which are, wherever possible, local.	2	3	6
5.3 To develop and sustain creative solutions to identified need and ensure integrated services maximise the well being of children and young people with a disability in line with the ECM five outcomes and the National Service Framework Standard 8.	3	3	9
5.4 Children & young people who have offended or are at risk of offending being offered the opportunities & support they need to become valued and productive members of the community.	1	3	3
5.5 Improved quality of safeguarding across all services working with/in contact with children.	2	4	8

Aim 6 To provide effective strategic planning & commissioning of services through robust partnerships (including the voluntary sector), which improve the Every Child Matters outcomes of children and young people in Swindon.

To demonstrate we have achieved this we will expect to see:	Risk Rating		
	L	I	Risk
Aim 6	4	2	8
6.1 An effective strategic planning framework is in place with an agreed strategic vision and joint priorities agreed across agencies and reflected in joint commissioning strategies with appropriate procurement.	2	3	6
6.2 Outcome based priorities are agreed based on a) rigorous analysis of performance management and b) community based needs assessment reflecting diversity.	2	3	6
6.3 Joint strategic plans and strategies are outcome based and regularly reviewed.	1	3	3
6.4 All strategies and plans are underpinned by developing rigorous and creative participation of children, young people and parents and carers.	3	3	9
6.5 Timely implementation of the legal requirements of the Children Act & Youth Matters being achieved by the department providing effective strategic leadership and implementing a focused change management programme	1	4	4
6.6 All strategies and plans are fully equalities impact assessed and reflected in the work of the Directorate	1	3	3
6.7 Timely provision of management information to inform strategic planning and the effective allocation of resources.			